Christian Dawn

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Neio Lúcio

CHAPTERS

CHRISTIAN DAWN

The pages of Neio Lúcio are dedicated to young minds at all stages of physical experience. They offer a valuable course in spiritual enlightenment.

This book serves as a seedbed for renewing principles. Here, we find advanced ideas of justice and goodness that help elevate life. Even the earthly struggle, seen as expiation, becomes part of the educational work for eternity.

Education is, without a doubt, the miraculous key to progress. Without it, the human mind would persevere on the slippery slopes of ignorance, confined to misery, idleness, indigence, and misfortune, through delinquency in the public square and correction in the penitentiary.

Nevertheless, it is not enough to enlighten the intellect; we will repeat several times. It is essential to perfect the heart in the ways of goodness.

Nero, the tyrant, was a disciple of Seneca, the philosopher. Titus, the admirable prince, who used to say "I wasted my day" when night surprised him without some exceptional gesture of kindness, ordered the massacre of more than ten thousand sick Israelites, slaughtered and mutilated after ruining Jerusalem. Marcus Aurelius, the virtuous and wise emperor, tolerated the massacre of defenseless Christians. Ignatius of Loyola was a pretty well-intentioned literate. Still, he encouraged the religious persecution. Marat, the bloodthirsty demagogue, was a distinguished journalist and renowned intellectual.

Warlords, dictators, and revolutionaries—both ancient and modern—often spent time with notable professors, academic books, and renowned universities. Reason without light, yet, can become mere calculation.

Education and science are gateways to education and wisdom. Those who are only well-instructed about something do not always possess complete knowledge about it.

The culture of the spirit goes further: it helps man become like a living sanctuary, through which the Sovereign and Merciful Power can be seen and felt by others.

It is necessary, therefore, to sow ennobling and sanctifying thoughts, supporting the mind that begins anew the lesson of individual improvement.

Rejoicing, then, in the work of our friend who has given us these pages, full of paternal sentiments and high ideals, we greet with him the sublime dawn of love and peace that shines with Jesus, for the Earth of tomorrow, regenerated and happy.

EMMANUEL

Pedro Leopoldo, June 21, 1948.

1

Let Us Continue with Jesus

Muhammad was a valiant leader. Millions of people bowed to his orders. However, he left his body like any mortal, and his remains were enshrined in an urn, which is visited annually by thousands of curious onlookers and followers.

Charles V, the powerful Emperor of Spain, dreamed of dominating the entire Earth, possessed immense wealth, and ruled many regions. One day, though, he surrendered his crown and mantle to the dust.

Napoleon was a great man. He fought many wars. He dominated millions of creatures. He left an unforgettable name in the book of nations. Yet, today his tomb is venerated in Paris...

Many people make pilgrimages there to visit his bones...

As with Muhammad, Charles V, and Napoleon, the world's greatest heroes are remembered in monuments that hold their remains.

Nonetheless, with Jesus, it is different. In Our Lord's tomb, there is no sign of human ashes. No precious stones, no priceless marble, with phrases indicating the presence of flesh and blood. When the apostles visited the tomb on the glorious morning of the Resurrection, there was neither mourning nor sadness. There, they found a messenger from the spiritual realm who told them, "He is not here." And the tomb has stood open and empty for almost two thousand years.

Following Jesus, therefore, through the endeavor of each day, we will never encounter the anguish of death, but rather, ceaseless life.

On the path of notable guides of the world, we may encounter beautiful spectacles of fleeting glory; nevertheless, it is very difficult not to end the experience in disillusionment and dust.

Only Jesus offers an unchanging path to the Divine Ressurection.

Therefore, whoever develops, with the example and word of the Master, working to reveal goodness and light within themselves from the struggles and teachings of the world, can walk forward with unwavering certainty.

Secure in their place as a celestial citizen, assured of ceaseless life and the ultimate victory beyond death.

2
Towards Goodness

The Lord created everything for good.

All people and creatures, therefore, are called to produce fruifully.

The tender grass sustains the animals.

The hidden spring helps the humble insect.

The tree is a blessed companion to men.

The flower will bear fruit.

The fruit will give us a plentiful table.

The river distributes its waters.

The rain washes the sky and quenches the thirsty earth.

The stone forms the foundation of our house.

The good word reveals the right path.

How can we ignore the holy purposes of life if the nature that sustains it reflects the wise designs of Providence?

A great school for our spirit, the Earth is a gigantic book in which we can read the message of universal love that our Heavenly Father sends us.

From the dewdrop that nourishes the thorny cactus to the sunlight that shines high above for all beings, we can feel the call of Infinite Wisdom to serve in cooperation for the happiness, peace, and joy of our neighbor.

Every man and woman is born into the world for sanctifying tasks, according to Divine Law.

With joy, the good administrator governs the people's interests. With joy, the good farmer plows the soil and protects the seedbed.

The man who sows the ground, ensuring the subsistence of people and creatures, is the brother of the one who directs the thoughts of nations toward divine knowledge.

The woman who receives honors for her public virtues is the sister of the one who, in the privacy of her home, sacrifices herself for her sick child.

God knows people by what they produce, just as we know trees by the fruits they bear.

So, good men are loved and respected. Their presence attracts the affection and veneration of the others. Bad men, however, are bearers of undesirable actions and words, and everyone avoids their company, just as we stay away from thorny and ungrateful plants.

The good man understands that life asks him for the blessing of service and gets up every morning thinking, “What a beautiful day to work!”

The bad man, however, gets up in a bad mood. He does not know how to smile at those around him and often exclaims, "What a terrible day! What a cruel fate! I hate work and I hate life!"

A man like this needs the help of good men, as by not dedicating himself to worthy service, he will indeed be very unhappy.

3
Short Story

One day, the Drop of Water, the Ray of Light, the Bee, and the Lazy Man arrived at the Throne of God.

The Almighty received them kindly and asked about their work.

The Drop of Water came forward and said: "Lord, I was in a nearly deserted area, helping an orange tree root. I saw many trees suffering from thirst and various animals passing by, distressed, looking for springs. I did what I could, but I come to ask You for other drops of water to help me aid those in need."

The Father smiled, satisfied, and exclaimed: "Blessed are you for understanding My works. I will give you the resources of rain and springs."

Immediately after, the Ray of Light spoke:
"Lord, I descended... I descended... and found the bottom of an abyss. In that cave, I fought the shadow as best I could, but I noticed the presence of many creatures begging for light. I come to Heaven to beg You for other rays of light to cooperate with me in the liberation of all those in the world who still suffer the pressure of darkness."

The Father, pleased, responded: "Blessed are you for your service to Creation. I will give you the help of the Sun, the lamps, the illuminated books, and the good words found on Earth."

Afterward, the Bee provided an explanation:

"Lord, I have made all the honey within my reach. But I see so many weak and sick children that I come to you begging for more flowers and more bees to increase production..."

The Father, overjoyed, smiled and replied: "Blessed are you for the benefits you have bestowed. I will grant you new gardens and companions."

Next, the lazy Man was invited to share his thoughts. He made an

unpleasant face and said: "Lord, I could do nothing. On every side, I encountered envy and persecution, hatred and evil. My arms were tied by the ingratitude of my neighbor. So many evil people stood in my path that, truly, I could do nothing."

The kind Father, with an expression of discontent, exclaimed: "Woe to you, who despised the gifts I gave you. You fell asleep in laziness and did nothing. The small and humble beings gladdened my Throne with the report of their labors, but your mouth solely complains, as if the intelligence and hands I entrusted to you were worthless. Depart! Useless and ungrateful children should not seek My presence. Return to the world and do not seek Me again until you learn to serve."

The Water Drop returned, crystal clear and beautiful. The Ray of Light came back to the depths, shining ever brighter. The Bee descended, buzzing happily. The Lazy Man, however, withdrew, deeply sad.

4
Reward for Sacrifice

Three brothers devoted to Jesus read in the Gospel that every individual will always receive according to his own works, and promised to follow the Master's teachings.

The first was admitted to a cotton thread industry and applied himself so diligently to his work that he soon became interested in administrative profits. Within twenty-five years, he rose to the position of organization leader and was recognized as a genuine benefactor of the people. He made money with great ease and helped the unfortunate and suffering. He divided the work equitably and distributed the profits with justice and goodness.

The second studied for a long time and eventually became a famous judge. Enjoying the respect and esteem of his contemporaries, he never forgot the commitments he had made to the Gospel. As a result, he defended the humble, helped the poor, and freed many prisoners who had been persecuted by evil. Later, he rose from judge to legislator, cooperating in the drafting of beneficial and edifying laws. Throughout his career, he always lived honorably, richly, happily, correctly, and with dignity.

The third, however, was paralyzed. He could not use his intelligence easily. He could not run a factory or preside over a court. His legs were withered. His bed was his home. He remembered, however, that he could offer a service of prayer, and he began the task with the humble woman who cleaned his house. He noticed her sadness and, with empathy and discretion, sought to understand her concerns. He offered comfort, invited her to pray, and requested divine blessings on her behalf.

The three brothers died at an advanced age, within a short time of each other. After their passing, when the brothers were reunited in the spiritual life, an Angel came to examine their works with a scale.

The industrialist and the judge each brought a large bag containing the money and judgments they had distributed to help others. The servant of prayer carried only a small book where he recorded his prayers. The industrialist was blessed for providing comfort to

those in need, while the judge was praised for his wise and fair judgments.

When the Angel, however, opened the book of the former paralytic, a great light came out, enveloping everything in a radiant crown. The scale was incapable of measuring its greatness.

Then the Messenger spoke to him happily:
"Your brothers are welcome in the Father's House for the resources they distributed in favor of their neighbors, but in truth, it is not very difficult to help with money and labor, which multiply easily in the world.

Be blessed, however, because you gave of yourself in sanctifying love. You have spent your hands, eyes, heart, strength, feelings, and time for the benefit of your neighbor, and the Law of Sacrifice determines that your dwelling place shall be higher. You have not only transmitted the goods of life: you have radiated the gifts of God.

And the humble servant of the people was led to a higher heaven, where he began to exercise authority over many people.

5

The Happy Servant

One day, a Marshal, a Philosopher, a Politician, and a Farmer arrived in Heaven. A Divine Emissary received them in a high sphere to hear them out.

The Marshal approached reverently and spoke:
"Messenger of the Supreme Command, I come from Earth. I have earned medals for merit, overcome many adversaries, and received honors commemorated in monuments bearing my name."

“What do you want in return for your great services?” asked the Envoy.
“I want to enter Heaven.”

The Angel replied without hesitation:
"For now, you cannot receive the gift. Soldiers and adversaries, women and children, call you insistently from Earth. Check what they claim about your passage through the world and return later."

The Philosopher approached the divine representative and spoke:
"Angel of the Eternal Creator, I come from the narrow circle of men. I have given creatures much material for thought. I have been honored by various academies. My portrait appears in the gallery of earthly dictionaries."

"What do you expect from what you have done?" asked the Emissary.
"I want to enter Heaven."

"For now, however," the messenger replied without hesitation, "the concession is not yours. Many minds are working with the ideas you have left in the world and demand your presence, so they may know how to separate your personal whims from sublime inspiration. Return to your old post, resolve your problems, and return in due course."

The Politician took the floor and emphasized:
“Minister of the Almighty, I was an administrator of public interests

I signed several laws that influenced my time. My name appears on many official documents."

"What do you ask in compensation?" asked the Missionary from Above.
"I want to enter Heaven."

The Envoy, however, replied firmly:

"For now, you cannot be served. The people hold differing opinions about you. Countless people pronounce your name with bitterness, and these cries reach here. Return to your office, attend to the matters that concern your inner peace, and come back later."

Then the Farmer approached and stated humbly:
"Messenger of Our Father, I was a cultivator of the land... I planted corn, rice, potatoes, and beans. No one knows me, but I had the glory of knowing God's blessings and receiving them, in the rays of the sun, in the beneficent rain, in the blessed soil, in the seeds, in the flowers, in the fruits, in the love and tenderness of my little children..."

The Angel smiled and said: "What reward do you desire?"

The Farmer asked, weeping with emotion:
"If Our Father permits, I would like to come back to the field and continue working. I miss the daily miracles contemplation. The light appearing in the sky at the right time, the flower blooming of its own accord, the bread multiplying!... If I can, I will plant the soil again to see the divine greatness revealed in the grain, transformed into a bountiful ear of wheat... I aspire to no other happiness than to continue learning, sowing, praising, and serving!"

The Spiritual Messenger embraced him and exclaimed, also weeping with joy:
"Come with me! The Lord wishes to see and hear you, because only those who seek to work and serve without reward appear before the Heavenly Throne."

6
Rebelliousness

The little rebel loved his widowed Mother with a deep love; however, deceived by her lack of discipline, he listened to her perverse advice.

He enjoyed reading sensational stories in which rebellious men formed gangs of criminals in big cities, and, to any uplifting page, he preferred the serial with unpleasant or criminal adventures. He immersed himself in so many stories of bad people that, although his mother's words invited him to dignified work, they always brought negative and harsh responses to the tip of his tongue.

-"Son," the lady exclaimed patiently, "a good man settles for service."

-"Not me!" He replied mockingly.

-"Let's go to the workshop. The boss promised to give you a position."

-"I won't go! I won't go!

-But you've already left school, my son. It's time to grow and progress in well-performed duties."

-"I didn't go to school to enslave myself. I have intelligence. I'll earn with less effort."

While his mother sewed late into the night to maintain the modest household, her son, now a young man, habitually lived on the busy street. He drank excessively and fell into dangerous associations that gradually degraded his character.

He would arrive home drunk late at night, often escorted by police officers. His devoted mother would come to his aid at every moment and pleaded with him the next day: "Son, let's work with dignity. Any time is appropriate for rectifying our mistakes."
Brazen and ungrateful, he grumbled:
"You don't understand me. Shut up. You only talk about duty, duty, duty..."

The poor seamstress begged her to calm down, to be sensible, and then wept in prayer. As his vice grew deeper, the boy began stealing secretly.

He robbed businesses, where he knew he had easy access to money, and when his mother, sensing his failings, tried to advise him, he shouted:
"Mother, I don't need your observations! I'll leave you in peace and return later with a great fortune. I'll give you a home, clothing, and abundant well-being. Your mind is preoccupied with obligations because from an early age you've been living a miserable life."

With that, he ran away to the street and never returned home. No one heard from him again. He had left for good, heading for the big city, with the intention of stealing other people's money so that he could return to his mother's home a very rich man.

Time passed. One, two, three, four, five years... His mother, however, did not lose hope of finding him again. One day, the press published in the newspapers the portrait of a thief who had become famous for his audacity and intelligence.

The seamstress recognized her son in him and rang for the city where he was sheltered. The police did not know her address, and as it was difficult to locate him quickly, the woman took a room in a hotel to wait.

On the third night she was there, she noticed a masked man entering her dark room. He hurriedly approached to steal her purse. She coughed and was about to scream for help when the thief, fearing the consequences, grabbed her throat and strangled her. In her death throes, the seamstress recognized her son's presence and whispered weakly:
"My... my... son..."

Hallucinated, the boy turned to light, recognized his already dead mother, and fell to his knees, screaming in savage pain...

Disobedience had gradually led him to crime and madness.

7

The Great Prince

A powerful and wise Eastern king, finding himself aging and ill, gathered his three sons, gave each of them two camels laden with gold, silver, and precious stones, and ordered them to spend these treasures traveling throughout the kingdom for three months, with the obligation to return immediately afterward so he could choose the prince who would succeed him to the throne.

At the end of the established period, the young men returned to their father's home.

The two eldest wore rich robes and arrived amidst the tremendous noise of carriages, but the third arrived tired and out of breath, leaning on a staff like a beggar, arousing the irony and astonishment of many.

The kind king discreetly blessed them and prepared to listen to them, before a large crowd.

The first approached, bowed deeply, and announced:

"My father and my sovereign, I have traveled throughout the center of the country and acquired, for your resting place, an admirable palace, where your name will be venerated forever.

I have purchased strong slaves to serve you and gathered, in this castle worthy of you, all the wonders of our time. From this resplendent dwelling, you will be able to rule forever honored, strong, and happy."

The monarch uttered a few words of thanks, showed a loving gesture of approval, and ordered his second son to come forward:

"My father and my king!" he exclaimed happily, "I bring you the richest collection of carpets in the world. Dozens of people lost their sight in order to weave them." A caravan of twenty camels approaches the city, carrying these precious things that I offer you, oh august leader, to reveal your fortune and power!”

The monarch expressed his gratitude in a warm sentence and recommended that the younger man speak.

The youngest son, feeble and poorly dressed, knelt down and said:

“Beloved father, I have brought no trophy to your venerable and glorious throne... I have traveled across the land that the Supreme Lord has entrusted to you, from north to south and east to west, and I have seen that your subjects expect peace and well-being from your government, just as believers await happiness from Heaven's Protection...

In the mountains, I found fever devouring poorly sheltered bodies, and I mobilized doctors and medicines in favor of the suffering. In the North, I saw ignorance dominating thousands of helpless children and young people, and I established schools in the name of your just administration. In the West, in the swampy regions, I was surprised by bands of lepers, and I gave them suitable shelter in your name.

In the cities of the South, I noticed that hundreds of women and children are viciously exploited by human wickedness, and I began the construction of workshops where uplifting work would gather them. At the borders, I met countless slaves with wounded shoulders, embittered and sick, and I freed them, announcing to them the magnanimity of your crown!”

The commotion interrupted him. There was a great silence, and it was seen that the old sovereign's eyes were filled with tears.
The young man gathered his courage and finished:

“I apologize for using your resources to assist those in need and for not bringing material wealth back. I have witnessed the hardship, illness, and hunger within your realm. My gratitude for your guidance and the sense of duty you instilled in me is my only offering.
I cannot rest while suffering persists in this kingdom, as you have taught me that everyone's needs are equally important, regardless of status.

The old monarch, weeping and trembling, descended from the throne, embraced his ragged son at length, removed his crown, and placed it on his forehead, exclaiming solemnly:

“Great Prince: May God, the Eternal Lord, bless you forever! It is your right to rule as long as you live.”

The crowd applauded, delirious with joy, while the young sovereign, kneeling, sobbed with emotion and gratitude.

8
The Upright Judge

Before the court of Eliakim ben Jephthah, a respectable and wise judge, appeared the merchant Jonathan ben Kayar, dragging Zerubbabel, a wretched beggar.

"This man," the merchant cried furiously, "has played me a deception of vast proportions! He sold me a necklace of fake pearls for five gold pieces, claiming they were worth five thousand gold pieces. I bought the jewels, believing I had made an excellent deal, only to discover that their price was less than two boiled eggs. I filed a complaint directly against the deceiver, but this vagabond has already wasted my precious money. I demand justice for him! He is a base and condemnable thief!

The magistrate, however, who worshipped Supreme Justice, recommended that the accused speak in turn:

"Great judge," he said timidly, "I acknowledge having transgressed the regulations that govern us. However, I have my two children stretched out in bed, and I seek in vain for decent work, as they always refuse me, citing my age and poor appearance. Indeed, I have deceived my neighbor and am a criminal, but I promise to repay my debt as soon as I can."

The judge pondered for a long time and sentenced:
"For Zerubbabel, the beggar, five lashes of the cane within four walls, so that he may learn to suffer honestly, without robbing his neighbor's purses. For Jonathan, the merchant, twenty lashes of the cane in the public square, so he may no longer abuse the humble."

The merchant protested, outraged: "What do I hear? I am the victim of a thief and must pay for faults I did not commit? Iniquity! Iniquity! “

The magistrate, however, banged his gavel loudly on the table, drawing the attention of those present, and clarified loudly:

"Jonatan ben Caiar, true justice does not reside on Earth to examine appearances. Zerubbabel, the vagabond, head of an unfortuna-

te family, stole five pieces of gold from you, intending to help his miserable children. But you, in turn, tried to steal from him, taking advantage of the misfortune that pursues him, taking possession of an object, you believed to be worth five thousand pieces of gold for the paltry price of five.

Who is more harmful to society before God: the starving wretch who steals a loaf of bread to satisfy his children's hunger? Or the man already blessed by the Goodness of the Eternal, with the gifts of fortune and skill, who absorbs an entire bakery for himself in order to deliberately exploit the poverty of others?

He who steals out of necessity may be mad, but he who accumulates wealth indefinitely, without using it for constructive work or for the practice of good, with absolute disregard for the plight of the poor, will often appear intelligent and shrewd.

In the eyes of those in the world who have fallen asleep in selfishness and excessive ambition he is right. But he is a criminal before the Almighty, who will judge us all in due time.

Thus, under the watchful eye of robust guards, Zerubbabel took five blows with a cane in a room with sealed doors, to learn to suffer without stealing, and Jonathan took twenty, in the public street, so as to no longer exploit, without scruples, the misery, simplicity and trust of the people.

9
The Distracted Wealthy Man

There was once a devout man who arrived in Heaven and, upon being welcomed by an Angel of the Lord, implored him, enraptured:

"Divine Messenger, what must I do to come and live permanently alongside Jesus?"

“Do good,” replied the Angel, “and return later.”

“May I ask you for resources for such a mission?”

“Ask for whatever you wish.”

“I want money, lots of money, to help my neighbor.”

The emissary was surprised by the request and considered:
“Gold is not always the most effective aid for that.”

"I think, however, my holy friend, that without gold, it is very difficult to practice charity."

“And do you not fear the temptations along the way?”

“No.”

"You will have what you desire," the messenger stated, "but do not forget that each man's treasure remains where his heart is, for every soul resides where it places its thought. Your material possibilities will be multiplied. However, do not forget that divine gifts, when withheld unreasonably by man, without any benefit to others, transform him into a prisoner of them. The law dictates that we be slaves to the excesses in which we indulge."

The man promised to practice charity, to serve extensively, and returned to the world. The Angels of Prosperity then began to help him.

At first, they multiplied his clothes and feeding; however, the man, already well provided for, begged for more clothes and sustenance.

They gave him a house and possessions. Far from practicing goodness, however, he always considered the gifts he possessed insufficient and begged for more houses and possessions. They brought him flocks and farms, but the man, interested in ascending to paradise through the path of charity, now fearing poverty, begged for more flocks and more farms.

He did not give up a room or give soup to anyone, declaring himself without resources to help the needy, and always expected more in order to distribute some bread with them. However, the more Heaven gave him, the more he demanded from Heaven. From being spontaneous and cheerful, he became suspicious, sullen, and unsociable.

Fearing both friends and enemies, he hid large sums in a safe. When old age came, death separated him from his great fortune. To his astonishment, after death, he found himself awake in spirit, lying in the large safe where he had once guarded his fortune.

Gold, silver, and stacks of worn banknotes formed his bed. Hungry and thirsty, he could not help himself to the coins; longing for freedom, he felt trapped by the bills, like a bird caught by mistletoe.

“Holy Angel!” he cried, weeping. “Come! Help me leave toward the Heavenly Home!"

The messenger deigned to descend to him and, noticing his suffering, exclaimed:

"It is too late for supplications! You are suffocating under the current of material comforts the Lord has entrusted to you, because you have only let it flow around you, without any benefit to your brothers in struggle and experience..."

"And what must I do," begged the unfortunate man, "to regain peace and gain paradise?"

The Angel thought and thought... and replied:
"Distribute profitably the coins you have uselessly collected, dispose of the vast land you have vainly retained, deliver to the circulation of good all the valuables you have received from the Divine Treasury and which you have accumulated around your feet, catering to selfishness, vanity, greed, and destructive ambition. After

that, come to me so we can resume the understanding we reached sixty years ago..."

Recognizing, however, that he no longer had a body of flesh for such service, he began to scream and blaspheme, as if hell were dwelling within his own conscience.

10
The Workhorse

In the days before automobiles, in the stables of a famous royal palace, a packhorse was feeling immensely bitter, faced with the jokes and taunts of its roommates.

Noticing his battered coat, the deep scars on his back, and his sad, humble head, a beautiful Arabian horse, who had won many prizes, approached and said proudly:
"What a sad fate you have been given! Don't you envy my standing in the races? I am caressed by the hands of princesses and praised by the words of kings!"

"Of course!" Exclaimed a colt of fine English origin. "How can a donkey understand the brilliance of betting and the joy of hunting?"

The unfortunate animal accepted the sarcasm resignedly. Another superb horse, of Hungarian origin, joined in and commented:
"Ten years ago, when I was away in a neighboring pasture, I saw this wretched creature suffering harshly at the hands of a brutal trainer. It's such a coward that it wouldn't even fight back, not even with a kick. It was born for nothing but being carried and beaten. It's shameful to endure his company."

At this, an admirable Spanish donkey approached the group and mercilessly remarked:
"I regret to recognize this donkey as a close relative. It is a dishonorable, weak, useless animal... It lives only under heavy discipline. Furthermore, it does not know the value of personal dignity and self-esteem. I accept the duties that fall to me up to the proper limit, but if I am forced to exceed my obligations, I refuse to obey, I buck, and I am capable of killing."

The insulting remarks had not ended when the king entered the enclosure, accompanied by the head of the stables.

"I need an animal for a job of great responsibility," said the monarch, "a docile and well-trained animal that deserves absolute trust."

The employee asked: “Wouldn't you prefer an Arabian, Your Majesty?” “No, no,” said the sovereign, “it is too proud and is only suitable for races at official celebrations of little importance.”

“Would you like the English colt?” "Not at all. It is too restless and is only good for the extravagances of hunting.”

“Would you prefer the Hungarian?” "No, no. It is wild, without any training. It is only good for herding sheep."

“Would a donkey do?” insisted the attentive servant. “Not at all. It is cunning and cannot be trusted.”

After a few moments of silence, the sovereign asked:
“Where is my pack donkey?” The head of the stables pointed it out among the others.

The king himself lovingly pulled him out, had him adorned with the resplendent coats of arms of his House, and entrusted his son, still a child, to him on a long journey.

Thus it is in life. On all occasions, we always have numerous friends, acquaintances, and companions, but only those who have learned to endure, serve, and suffer without considering themselves render us truly useful services.

11
The Unforgettable Lesson

Hilda, a wealthy girl, daily addressed harsh words to the little sweet seller who humbly knocked on her door.

"How shameful! On a tray! From corner to corner! Get out of here!" She shouted, without reason. The modest girl turned pale and trembled.

Meanwhile, the lady of the house, trying to educate her daughter, would come to the humiliated girl and say kindly:
"Such perfect sweets! Who made them so beautiful?"
The girl, revived, happily replied:
"It was Mommy."

The generous lady always bought something and then advised her daughter:
“Hilda, don't play with fate. Never turn away someone in need who comes to us. Who knows what will happen tomorrow? Those we help will probably be our benefactors."

The girl grumbled, and that evening, at dinner, her father echoed his mother's advice, adding:
"Don't make fun of anyone, my daughter! Work, however humble, is always respectable and edifying. Surely, painful needs will drive a child to sell candy door to door."

Hilda, however, the next day, lashed out at the vendor, exclaiming:
"Get out of here! Witch! Witch!"

The devoted mother welcomed the barefoot girl and repeated to her daughter the previous day's loving warnings.

Time passed, and after four years, the landscape of life changed.

Hilda's father fell ill, and despite the doctors' efforts to save him, he died on a quiet afternoon, leaving the home empty. His widow took to her bed, extremely depressed, and with the enormous expenses, poverty, and discomfort soon invaded her residence.
The poor lady could barely move. Hardships came in droves. The

girl, previously wealthy, now could not even buy a pair of shoes.

Distressed by the anguishing situation, one night, Hilda cried profusely, remembering her father. She fell asleep, tearful, and dreamed that he came from Heaven to comfort her. She heard him say clearly: "Don't be discouraged, my daughter! Go to work! Sell sweets to help your mother!"

She woke up the next day with the firm intention of following the advice. She helped her ailing mother make many squares of dulce de leche and soon after, went out to sell them. Some generous people bought them with the obvious intention of helping her; meanwhile, other creatures, mainly wicked boys, shouted in her ear: "Get out of here! You witch on a tray!"

She felt sad and dejected when she knocked on the door of a modest house. The gracious young woman answered.

Ah! What a surprise! It was the poor girl who used to sell coconut candies in the past. She was grown up, well dressed, and beautiful.

Hilda expected her to mistreat her out of revenge, but the humble young woman looked at her with her big eyes, recognized her, understood her new situation, and exclaimed happily:
“What perfect sweets! Who made them so beautiful?” The girl recalled her mother's teachings from years ago and replied:
“My mom did.”

The former saleswoman bought all the cookies left on the tray and embraced her with sincere friendship. From that day on, the vain girl was forever changed. The experience had taught her an unforgettable lesson.

12
The Surefire Formula

One day, an angry man created a powerful and extensive thought of hatred, put it in a rude and discourteous letter, and sent it to the boss of the workshop from which he had been fired.

The thought was expressed in the form of cruel threats. And when the director of the service read the ungrateful phrases that expressed it, he welcomed it, unexpectedly into his own heart, and became furious without knowing why.

He found, almost immediately, the deputy head of the workshop and, under the pretext of looking at a small broken part, unleashed on him the mental bomb he was carrying with him.

It was the assistant's turn to become neurasthenic, without knowing why. He harbored the evil projection in his feelings, remained sulking for several hours, and at lunchtime, instead of eating, he unleashed the dangerous intangible dart on his wife. Just by seeing an imperfectly polished shoe, he uttered dozens of ugly words.
He felt relieved, and his wife began to harbor the hateful vibration in her chest, in the form of inexplicable rage.

Suddenly distraught by the lightning that had struck her, which, until then, no one had been able to remove, she walked over to the housemaid in charge of shoe service and poured out her heart. With unwelcome words, she inoculated the invisible skewer into her chest.

Now, it was a poor girl who held the mental poison. Unable to pour it into the plates and cups within her reach, in view of the enormous debt in money she would be forced to accept, she approached the old, sleepy, and patient dog and transferred the imponderable poison to him with a kick of large proportions.

The animal yelped and bolted, touched by the deadly energy, and, to free itself, bit the first person it encountered on the street. It was the lady of a neighboring landowner who, wounded in the thigh, became instantly enraged, possessed by the malevolent force.
Screaming in desperation, she was taken to a pharmacy; however, she hurriedly transferred the cursed vibration to the nurse who

was assisting her. She pelted him with curses and slapped him across the face.

The once very helpful boy, calm as he was, turned into a true beast. He retaliated against the blows with harsh remarks and left, frantic, for the residence, where his devoted old mother was waiting for him for the afternoon meal. He arrived and unleashed all the wrath he carried upon her.

"I'm fed up!" he cried. "You are to blame for the troubles that haunt me! I can't bear this miserable life any longer! Get away from me!" He uttered terrible names. He cursed. He screamed angrily, like a madman.

The old woman, however, far from becoming angry, took his hands and said naturally and gently:
"Come here, my son! You are tired and sick! I know the extent of your sacrifices for me, and I recognize that you have reason to complain. However, let us be of good cheer! Let us remember Jesus! Everything passes on Earth. Let us not forget the love the Master left us..."

She embraced him, moved, and stroked his hair.

The son lingered to gaze into her serene eyes and recognized that there was so much forgiveness and understanding in her maternal affection that he began to cry, apologizing. Then there was an explosion of intimate joy between the two. They dined happily and prayed in gratitude to God.

It was broken the circle of hate.

The destructive projection of hatred had finally died there, within their humble home, before the infallible and sublime power of love.

13
The Negligent Employee

At the door of a large carpentry shop, a young man arrived, carrying a box on his back, looking for a job. He seemed humble and polite.

The director of the institution appeared, attentive, to assist him.
"Do you have any work for me?" The boy asked respectfully, after the usual greetings.

"There are many tasks," the boss explained.

"Oh, please!" The interested man replied. "My elderly parents need support. I have knocked, in vain, on the doors of several workshops. No one will help me. I will be content with a reduced salary and accept whatever hours you desire."

The director, very calm, emphasized:
"There is no shortage of work..."

The young man opened his toolbox. The condition of his tools was concerning.

The adze was deformed by thick rust.
The saw had several broken teeth.
The hammer had an incomplete handle.
The pliers were clearly disjointed.
Several chisels were unusable due to their poor condition.
Thick dust coated all the objects.
The workshop manager examined the tools and, disappointed, said:
"For you, sir, we have no work."
"Why?" the young man asked, his tone pleading.

The manager clarified, without bitterness:
"If you are not careful with the tools that belong to you, how will you preserve our machines? If you are indifferent to what you should feel honored by, will you ever be useful to the interests of others? Those who do not carefully watch over the “little” they have are not worthy of receiving the “much.

Learn to take care of things that seem unimportant. From the test pieces, great deals are made in this world, and contempt for yourself is an undesirable display of your pernicious indifference. Take advantage of the experience and come back later.

The pleas of the needy young man were in vain. He was compelled to withdraw, greatly disheartened, learning a hard lesson.

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The same thing happens in everyday life.

Those who desire an enlightened and glorious body in spirituality, beyond death, should respectfully take care of their physical body.

Those who aspire to the company of angels should present good manners, words, and deeds to others. Those who hope to reap joys in the future should take advantage of the present moment to sow the seeds of goodness.

So, those who dream of Heaven should strive to walk a path of elevation on Earth itself.

14
The Thoughtless Carelessness

At the orphanage where she worked, Sister Clara was everyone's idol because of the virtues that adorned her character. She was gentle, devoted, and diligent. No bad words ever came out of her polite mouth.

If anyone commented on the faults of others, she would come over solicitously and advise: "Let's have compassion... She steered the conversation toward benevolence and peace.

She inspired good cheer and love of duty in all who listened to her. Above all, she encouraged everyone around her to have a willingness to work and serve for the good.

“Sister Clara,” said an educator, "I need the dress for next Saturday." She, who was everyone's dedicated seamstress, replied happily: “We'll work late. The piece will be ready.”

“Sister,” one of the maids interjected, “what about the apron?” “It will be delivered tomorrow,” said Clara, smiling.

In all her activities, the devoted lady showed herself to be an angel of kindness and patience. Invariably surrounded by balls of thread, she breathed between the needle and the sewing machine.

During prayer times, she lingered long and contritely in prayer. As time passed, she became increasingly respected. Her opinions were sought with interest.

She had become an admirable authority in Christian life. In truth, she was worthy of the respect with which she was surrounded.

She supported without fanfare. She helped without concern for reward. She was kind without humiliating anyone with displays of superiority.

The years passed, as always, and the day arrived when death led her to the spiritual life. On Earth, the body of the unforgettable benefactor was surrounded by flowers and blessings, tributes, and songs, and her soul ascended gloriously to Heaven.

An angel greeted her, affectionate and joyful, at the entrance. He greeted her, spoke of the gifts she had spread, but, in awe, Sister Clara heard him say:
"I regret that you cannot stay with us for more than three weeks."

"Oh! Why?" The valiant missionary questioned.

"You will be forced to return, taking on a new body of flesh in the world," the messenger explained.

"How so?" She asked.

The angel looked at her kindly and replied:
"Sister, you were extremely virtuous; however, in your spiritual position, you could not have made such a mistake. You thoughtlessly wasted an enormous amount of thread. The skeins you lost, oblivious to the notion of use, could have sewn several thousand dresses for helpless children."

"Oh! Oh! God forgive me!" exclaimed the deceased saint. "And how will I repay the debt?"

The angel embraced her affectionately and comforted her, saying:
"Do not fear. We will all help you, but you will resume your work in the world, planting a cotton field."

15
The Power of Kindness

An eminent Black professor seeking to establish a school in an underserved neighborhood, where many children lacked access to literacy, met with the city's mayor, who responded firmly after hearing his proposal:
"Law and kindness don't always align. Set up a house, and we'll authorize it," the mayor said.

"But we lack resources," said the benefactor. "What can we do?"
"We must help these children," the professor insisted.

The mayor responded with a dismissive smile, saying, "You cannot interfere with administration."

The professor, deeply saddened, retired and spent the afternoon and evening of that Saturday thinking. Very early on Sunday, he went for a walk under the large trees, heading toward the old market.

He was saying in silent prayer: "My God, what should we do? Won't we have a place to stay for the little children, Lord?"

Absorbed in meditation, he reached the market and entered. The crowds were enormous. Many were buying. Many people. A distinguished-looking lady approached him, mistaking him for a common servant with idle hands and an empty head, and exclaimed, "Hey, you, come here."

The teacher followed her without hesitation. Standing before a large sack of over thirty kilos of vegetables, the matron gave instructions:
"Bring me this package."

He hefted the bundle onto his back and followed her. They walked confidently for about five hundred meters and entered an elegant villa. The lady asked again:
"I have visitors today. Could you help me with the general housework?"

"Perfectly," The man replied. "Give me your orders."

She pointed to a small courtyard and instructed him to prepare half a meter of firewood for the stove.

The teacher efficiently split the logs, then was asked to repair the chimney, which left his clothing soiled. Covered in dust, he was sent to collect a roast turkey from two kilometers away and promptly returned with it.

Soon after, he set about cleaning the extensive area where a lavish lunch would be served.

In the early afternoon, seven people arrived at the noble home. Among them was the mayor, who noted the presence of the previous day's visitor, introduced to his office by respected officials. He privately inquired of the lady, the owner of the house, about their new acquaintance, both speaking in hushed tones.

At the end of the day, the distinguished and authoritative matron, visibly disappointed, came to the improvised servant and asked for the price of the work.
“Don't worry about it,” he replied sincerely, "I was very happy to be of service to you."

The next day, however, the lady from the previous evening sought him out at the modest house where he was staying and, after apologizing, announced that she was granting him a large building for the school he wanted to establish.

The children would be free to use the property as they wished, and the mayor would gladly authorize the arrangement.

With his eyes moist with the joy and gratitude that reigned in his soul, the teacher thanked her and kissed her hands respectfully.

His kindness had overcome the legal obstacles.

Example is more powerful than argument.

Kindness is clothed everywhere with glorious power.

16
The Blessed Trilogy

In ancient times, the Lord often came to Earth to communicate with people. Once, He encountered an angry and evil man who did nothing but torment his neighbor. He persecuted, wounded, and killed without mercy.

When this savage spirit saw the Lord, he approached, drawn by His light, weeping with repentance. The kind Christ spoke to him: "My son, why have you given yourself over to wickedness? Do you not fear the justice of the Father? Do you not believe in the Heavenly Power? Life requires brotherhood and understanding."

The evildoer, who remained a prisoner of ignorance, replied in tears:
"Lord, from this day forward, I will be a good man."

A few years passed, and Jesus returned to the same place. He remembered the unfortunate man He had counseled and sought him out. After some searching, He found him hidden in a hut, extremely dejected.

When questioned about the cause of such a lamentable transformation, the wretch replied:
"Woe is me, Lord! After I became good, no one respected me! I made myself a laughingstock in the streets... I have shown compassion and generosity, as You taught me, but in return I receive only ridicule, stones, and lacerations..."

The Master, however, blessed him and spoke:
"Your reward in eternity will not be small for your sacrifice. However, retaining kindness alone is not enough. It is necessary to know how to distribute it. To help well, one must discern. We can help everyone. If we owe fraternal tenderness to many people, we owe energetic enlightenment to numerous companions on our journey.

We will encourage those who do good to improve further. We will also support those who struggle, helping them correct their actions.

Like a fruit grower who nurtures some trees and prunes others to ensure proper support."

The Lord withdrew, and the apprentice resumed his struggle to conquer knowledge. He explored many books, observed life closely, and received the palm of science.

The years passed quickly; Christ returned and sought him out again. This time, He found him in bed, sick and weak. Responding to his Divine Friend, he explained:

"Alas, Lord! I was good and treated unfairly. I entreasured knowledge, and my troubles increased significantly. I learned to love and act with a clear heart, to dream of a better purpose, but now I see thanklessness, arguments, coldness, and lack of care more clearly. I know things many people don't, and because of this, life has become too hard for me..."

The Master, however, smiled and considered:
"You are not ready for happiness yet. Now, you must be strong. Do you think a robust tree can live and grow if it cannot handle the wind? Inner strength, before life's experiences, will grant you the indispensable balance. Learn to say goodbye to everything that hinders you on your journey toward divine light, and you will spread kindness without worrying about rewards, guarding knowledge without bitter surprises. Be unwavering in your faith and move forward!"

The apprentice rose again and did not experience disharmony anymore, as he finally understood that kindness, knowledge, and strength are the blessed trilogy of happiness and peace.

17
The Account of Life

When Levindo turned twenty-one, his mother welcomed his friends, celebrated the occasion, and solemnized the event with great joy.

Deep down, however, the kind woman was sad and worried. Until adulthood, her son resisted discipline, avoided work, and disregarded efforts to encourage responsible behavior, despite his mother's dedication to his education. He refused good advice and openly leaned toward the precipice of vice.

That night, however, the selfless Mother prayed more fervently, begging Jesus to guide him to moral elevation. She entrusted him to Heaven with tears, convinced that the Divine Master would protect his young life.

The prayers of the devoted creature were heard on High, for Levindo, soon after being swept away by the wings of sleep, dreamed that he was sought out by a spiritual messenger, holding a large document in his hand.

Intrigued, the boy asked him why he was so surprised by such a visit. The messenger looked at him with wide eyes and replied: "My friend, I have come to bring you an account of the beings sacrificed so far for your benefit."

While the boy's eyes widened in astonishment, the messenger continued:

"To date, to sustain your existence, approximately 2,000 birds, 10 cattle, 50 pigs, 20 sheep, and 3,000 various fish have died. No less than 60,000 lives of the plant kingdom have been consumed by yours, including those of rice, corn, beans, wheat, and various roots and vegetables.

On average, you have drunk 3,000 liters of milk, consumed 7,000 eggs, and eaten 10,000 fruits. You have extensively exploited the families of air and water creatures, chicken coops and stables, pigpens and pens. The price of your days in the gardens and orchards is worth the devastation.

Besides this, we do not list here your maternal sacrifices, your father's resources and donations, the gifts of friends, and the attentions of the various benefactors who surround you.

In return, what useful thing have you done? You have not yet repaid Nature even the smallest portion of your immense debt. Do you perhaps believe that the center of the world lies in your individual needs and that you will live endlessly in the domains of Creation?

Produce something good, marking your passage on Earth. Remember that the grass itself is in divine service. Do not allow idleness to paralyze your heart and disfigure your spirit!...

The young man, astonished, began to see the parade of animals he had devoured and, in great shock, awoke...

Dawn had broken. The golden sun seemed to sing everywhere a glorious hymn to peaceful work. Levindo got up from the bed, ran to his mother, and exclaimed:
"Mommy, find me a job! Find me a job!"

"Oh! my son," the woman said, overcome with joy, "what joy! How happy I am!... What happened?"

And the boy, worried, informed her:
"Last night, I saw the balance of my life."

From that moment on, Levindo became an honorable and useful man.

18
Real Friendship

A respected individual who had gained both wisdom and wealth supported several less fortunate friends, encouraging them through their challenges.

As he grew older, he asked his son to assist him. He wanted his son to learn how to share kindness and resources effectively. To begin with, he sent him to the home of a longtime companion, to whom he gave three hundred cruzeiros a month. The young man followed his instructions. He traveled six kilometers and found the house indicated.

Contrary to his expectations, however, he did not find a dilapidated shack. The home, although modest, was charming and comfortable. Flowers perfumed the air, and white linen covered the furniture with beauty and dignity.

His father's recipient welcomed him warmly, and following a thoughtful conversation, arranged for coffee to be served in a courteous and refined manner. He introduced him to family and friends, who were happily enveloped in a vast halo of health and contentment.

Noticing the tranquility and abundance that reigned there, the bearer returned home without delivering the gift.
"For what?" He mused to himself.
"That man was not a beggar. He didn't seem to harbor any problems that merited compassion and charity. Certainly, my father has been mistaken."

Upon his return, he explained to his elderly father, in particular, what he had seen, refunding the sum he had been the messenger of. The old man, however, after listening calmly, took more money from his purse, doubled the amount, and considered:

"You did well to come back here. I was unaware that our friend was under more extensive commitments. Return to his residence and, instead of three hundred, give him six hundred cruzeiros monthly, in my name, from now on. His new situation demands double the resources."

"But, my father," the young man emphasized, addressing the old man directly, "he is not in a miserable position. I suppose his home is as comfortable as ours."

"I am very pleased with the news," the old man exclaimed. And, giving the counselor's voice a tender rebuke, he added:

"My son, if it is not lawful to give medicine to the healthy and alms to those who do not need them, the same rule does not apply to the companions God has entrusted to us.

Those who help their friends only in times of extreme misfortune may be exercising pity that humiliates rather than love that sanctifies. Those who wait for the day of suffering to do a favor will often find nothing but silence and death, missing the best opportunity to be useful.

We must not demand that our neighbor travelers become beggars in order to appear superior to them in all circumstances. Such an attitude on our part would be cruel and harsh. Let us extend our hands to him and lift him up to us, so that our help is not vain pride.

Everyone in the world can comfort the miserable and share their afflictions, but few learn to emphasize the joy of their loved ones, multiplying it for them, without selfishness or envy in their hearts.

A true friend, however, knows how to nurture love. Come back, then, and heed my advice so that our affection may grow into lasting love. I never wanted simply to attract those in need, but instead to foster lifelong companionship.

At that moment, the young man, guided by his father's wisdom, learned the lesson of true friendship and fulfilled his destiny.

19
The Living Teaching

When observing any building or service, Maria Cármen was never short of criticism.

When confronted with a dress belonging to her friends, she would exclaim without ceremony:
"The outfit is tolerable, but the details leave much to be desired. The collar is extremely poorly made, and the sleeves are defective."

When confronted with a piece of furniture, she would conclude her ironic observations with the phrase:
"Couldn't they have done something better?"

In front of any work of art, she would find lines and angles to condemn. Concerned, her little mother studied ways to give her useful instructions.

So it was that, one morning, she invited her daughter to join her in visiting the construction of a vast building. The young woman, who couldn't guess her plan, followed her, surprised.

They walked a few streets and stopped in front of the rising skyscraper.

The woman asked for the chief engineer's help and began showing her daughter the various departments. While many workers dug foundations on the hard ground, wielding pickaxes, heavy vehicles transported earth here and there, quickly and safely.

Sweaty and agile bricklayers began raising walls, under the attentive supervision of the technicians supervising the work. Trucks and carts brought material from far away. Loaders hurried about their duties.

The works director, invited by the matron to comment on the construction, kindly explained:
"We will be forced to invest a substantial amount of capital to cover the expenses." We will also require the collaboration of hundreds of skilled workers. Carpenters, plasterers, glaziers, painters, firefighters, and electricians will complete our work. Any construction

project requires a dedicated workforce. The girl, looking impressed, replied:
"So many people thinking, cooperating, and serving!"
"Yes," the chief considered, smiling expressively, "building is always very difficult."

Soon after, mother and daughter said their goodbyes, now heading toward an old neighborhood. They passed through some less pleasant alleys and squares and arrived in front of an old house being demolished. Its noble, colonial-style lines could be seen through the wings that were still standing.

A single man stood there, using a gigantic hammer, knocking down masonry and timber. As the walls crumbled with a crash, minute by minute, the young woman remarked:

"How terrible it is to ruin the efforts of so many in this way!"

The serene Mother then intervened and spoke with counsel:
"We have reached, my daughter, the end of the living teaching we seek. Every useful achievement on Earth requires the patience and sweat, the work and sacrifice of many people. Building is very difficult. But destroying and eliminating is always very easy. It only takes one person with a hammer to ruin the work of thousands.

Destructive criticism is a hammer we use criminally against the respectable efforts of others. Do you understand?”

The young woman nodded, and from then on sought to help everyone instead of tarnishing, discouraging, and hurting.

20
The Bee's Praise

A large blue-green fly, proudly displaying its sun-gilded wings, entered a room and found a humble bee carrying a small supply of resources for making honey. The fly, displaying clear arrogance, approached and addressed the bee:
"Where you appear, everyone flees. Don't you feel unwelcome? Your sting is terrible."

"Yes," said the bee with disappointment, "believe me, I suffer greatly when I am forced to interfere. My defense is, almost always, also my death."

"Could you not live with a bit more distinction and delicacy?" The fly remarked again. "Why must you sting indiscriminately?"

“No, my friend,” clarified the interlocutor. "It's not quite like that. I take no pleasure in disturbing. I live solely for the work that God has entrusted to me. This work is for the common good. When someone prevents me from performing my duty, I become restless and suffer. Sometimes, I even lose my life.”

“I believe, however, that if you had different manners... If you polished your wings so that they shone in the sunlight, and if you dressed in colors like mine, perhaps you wouldn't need to alarm anyone. No one would fear your intrusion."

"Ah! I can't spend much time on such a matter," the judicious bee argued. "My job doesn't allow me to present myself very neatly on all occasions. The production of honey, essential to the sustenance of our hive and necessary for many people, doesn't give me the opportunity to take excessive care of myself."

"Look!" the fly said dismissively. "Your legs are in a pitiful state..."

"I'm on duty," the worker explained humbly.

The other replied, "No! No! This is rubbish and slacking off."
Then, carefully cleaning its wings, the fly retreated and quieted down, as if observing.

At that moment, two ladies and a child entered the room. Noticing the bee trying to find its distant companions, one of the matrons shouted nervously:
"Watch out! Watch out for the bee! It stings mercilessly!"

The tiny winged worker headed for the field, and the proud fly began to show off, flying carefree.
"How wonderful!" exclaimed one of the ladies.
"It looks like a jewel!" said the other.

The lazy fly glided... glided... and, heading for the pantry, entered the cupboard, dropping larvae into the pastry dough and various dishes being prepared for the next day. It followed the child, imperceptibly, and landed on his head, infecting a slightly injured area. After a few hours, the whole family was left with worries. The charming blue-green fly had left filth and disease in its wake.

How often does this happen in life?

There are simple, hard-working, and loyal creatures, less pleasant to be around at first glance, who, like bees, suffer sarcasm and disappointment for fulfilling their duty to the benefit of all.

Conversely, many people impress as brilliantly presented as flies, who, after capturing our attention with their beautiful appearance, leave us solely with the larvae of slander, intrigue, malice, rebellion, and despair in our thoughts.

21
The Rebellious Ram

A certain very intelligent but unruly sheep, proud of how its wool benefited others and believing this made it superior to the rest of Creation, began to think it should not be subjected to shearing anymore.

"If my wool is so precious," it thought, "why should I endure the humiliation of those enormous scissors?"

Though it sometimes suffered intense cold, it ignored the comforts of the pen and the abundant food, focusing instead on resenting what it perceived as unfair treatment.

Bitter and blind to the shearing's meaning, it pleaded,
"My Father, my wool brings me anguish. Shearing is torment. Change me, Lord, let me not endure this burden!"

The Almighty kindly asked:
"What do you want Me to do?"

Vainly, the sheep replied:
"I want my wool to be all gold."

The request was granted. However, as soon as the proud sheep revealed itself to be covered in precious fur, several ambitious people attacked it mercilessly. They violently ripped out all its threads, leaving it with wounds.

The unfortunate sheep, moaning, ran to the Almighty and begged:
"My Father, change me again! I cannot display golden wool...
I would always encounter ruthless robbers."

The Sage of Sages asked:
"What do you want Me to do?"

The animal, moved by delusions of grandeur, begged:
"I want my wool to be crafted into exquisite porcelain."

And thus, it was done. However, as soon as it returned to the valley, a huge wind appeared in the sky, breaking all its threads and

tearing its flesh. He returned, distressed, to the All-Merciful and complained:
"Father, renew me!... Porcelain cannot withstand the wind...
I am exhausted..."
The Lord said to it:
"What do you want Me to do?"
"So as not to provoke the thieves or injure myself with broken porcelain, I want my fleece to be made of honey."

The Creator granted the request. However, as soon as the poor ram found itself in the sheepfold, swarms of disgusting flies covered it completely, and no matter how far it ran across the field, it could not stop them from sucking its sweet threads.

The wretched animal returned to the Almighty and begged:
"Father, change me... the flies have left me bleeding!"

The Lord asked again, with inexhaustible patience:
"What do you want Me to do?"

This time, the sheep thought longer and considered:
"I suppose I would be happier if my wool were like lettuce leaves."

The All-Good granted its wish again, and the ram returned to the plain, pleased with its new appearance. However, when some horses noticed it, its fortune did not improve. The horses seized it, and consumed its wool, devouring the lettuce.

The ram ran toward the Supreme Judge, dripping blood from its deep wounds, and, in tears, moaned humbly:
"My Father, I can't bear it anymore!"

As he sobbed for a long time, the All-Compassionate One, seeing that it had sincerely repented, observed:
"Come to life, my son! What do you ask now?"

The unfortunate ram replied, in tears:
“Father, I want to go back to being an ordinary sheep, as I always was. I don't want to be superior to my brothers. Today, I know that my shepherds from another time are my true friends. They never left me wounded and always gave me food and drink, lovingly...
I want to be simple and useful, as you made me, Lord!...

The Father smiled kindly, blessed him tenderly, and said: "Go back and follow your path in peace. You have finally understood that my plans are just. Each creature is placed, by my Law, in its rightful place, and if you want to receive, learn to give."
Then the ram, ashamed but satisfied, returned to the valley, mingled with the others and was very happy.

22
The Worst Enemy

A man, admirable for his hard-working qualities and beautiful virtues of character, was spotted by the enemies of Humanity, whom we know as Ignorance, Slander, Evil, Discord, Vanity, Laziness, and Discouragement, who plotted among themselves to act against him, leading him to defeat.

The honorable worker lived happily among family and companions, cultivating the fields and giving thanks to the Supreme Lord for the joys he enjoyed in the contentment of being useful.

Ignorance began to consider persecution, presenting him to the people as a poor observer of religious obligations. He isolated himself in cultivating the land, filled with excessive ambitions to enrich himself at the expense of the sweat of others. He had no faith, nor did he respect good customs.

The active farmer received the news of the enemy operating from afar, smiled calmly, and spoke sincerely:
"Ignorance is excused."

Then Calumny appeared and denounced him to the authorities as a spy for foreign interests. That man lived almost alone, so he could better communicate with a vast gang of thieves. The police conducted a thorough investigation, and at the end of the humiliating inquiry, the victim stated without hatred:
“Calumny was wrong.”

And he worked with double moral courage. Soon after, Evil arrived, attacking him from closer quarters. It began its offensive, setting his countryside ablaze. It destroyed his vast cornfields, damaged his vineyards, and polluted his springs. However, the tireless worker, rebuilding for the future, responded serenely:
"Against the shadows of evil, I have the light of good."

The persecutors, recognizing that they had found a spirit robust in faith, instructed Discord, who began to harass him within his own home. Provocations surrounded him from all sides, and before long, his brothers and friends from the previous day abandoned

him. The diligent servant, this time, suffered greatly, but he raised his eyes to Heaven and spoke:

"My God and my Lord, I am alone; however, I will continue to act and serve in Your Name. Discord will be forgotten by me."

Then Vanity appeared and sought him out in his private quarters, saying:
"You are a great hero... You have overcome afflictions and battles! You will be seen before the multitude in the halo of the just and the saints!"

The sincere worker rebuffed her, unperturbed:
"I am but a breathing atom. All glory belongs to God!"

As Vanity left in disappointment, Sloth entered and, stroking his forehead with treacherous hands, assured him:
"Your sacrifices are excessive... Let's go to rest! You've already lost your best strength!"

Vigilant, however, the man he questioned replied without hesitation:
"My duty is to serve for the benefit of all, until the end of the struggle."

As Sloth left, defeated, Discouragement appeared. It did not attack from afar, nor from close by. It did not sit in the chair to chat, nor did it whisper in his ear. It entered the heart of the hard-working farmer and, after settling in, began to ask him:
"Strive for what? Why should you serve? Don't you see that the world is full of more competent collaborators? What reason justifies such a struggle? Who ordered you to be born into this body? Wasn't it God's own determination? Wouldn't it be better to leave everything to God? What are you waiting for? Do you know the purpose of life? Everything is useless... Don't you remember that death will destroy everything?"

The strong and courageous man, who had triumphed over many battles, began to listen to Discouragement's questions, lay down, and spent a hundred years without getting up.

23
The Wise Decision

In times long past, there was a powerful and good king who was renowned for his wisdom. The king was invited to solemnly examine a new invention from a subject whose mind was a prodigy in mathematics.

He attended the party where the device would be presented, dressed in his ceremonial robes. The proud mathematician showed off the work he had patiently created.

It was a large board covered in black velvet and surrounded by small cavities. Each cavity held a regular collection of colored wooden balls. The balls were activated by long ivory sticks and rolled toward the natural cavities.

This gave rise to a game of great interest because of the expectation it provoked. The party was filled with undisguised excitement. Various competitors played important matches.

All day long, a large crowd surrounded the invention, eating and drinking. The monarch himself shared the general joy and showed evident signs of satisfaction. He served himself lunch alongside large trays of meat, bread, and fruit. His friends accompanied him. The monarch applauded happily when a participant in the new and innocent game achieved an enviable position among their companions.

By evening, with the general curiosity quelled, the inventor awaited the sovereign's opinion with unsurpassed pride. The people also gathered to hear him, eager to learn what verdict would be given after such festive enthusiasm. The public never tired of admiring the game, played through amusing calculations.

Taking his leave, the king stood up, made himself visible to everyone, and spoke to his intelligent vassal:
"Brilliant mathematician: the authority of my crown decrees that your work of reasoning be rewarded with one hundred gold pieces, which the royal coffers will carry to your credit, even today, in honor of your patience and skill.

This remuneration, however, is intended not only for your personal value, but also for certain benefits that your machine brings to many men and women in my kingdom, less inclined to the constructive virtues that we all must respect in this world.

While playing your wooden balls, perhaps many individuals, whose criminal instincts are still dormant, will turn away from their likely crimes, and many idle hunters will leave the friendly animals of our forests alone."

The monarch paused for a long time, and the crowd erupted in delirious applause. The inventor was surrounded by embraces when the sovereign resumed:
"I must add, however, that the wisdom of my scepter commands that you be punished with fifty days of forced imprisonment, so that you may learn to use your intellectual capacity for the benefit of all.

Human intelligence is a light whose brightness must be consecrated to cooperation with the Supreme Lord on Earth. Your invention does not improve the field, nor does it create serious work.

It does not help the seeds and does not support the animals. It does not protect springs, nor maintain roads. It does not contribute to education, nor serve the ideals of good. Furthermore, it leads hundreds of people, as we have seen today, to waste valuable time in useless expectation.

Return to your blessed mental activities, even in prison, and dedicate your intelligence to creating services and utilities for the benefit of all, because, if my power rewards you, my experience corrects you."

The monarch paused for a long time, and the crowd erupted in delirious applause. The inventor was surrounded by embraces when the sovereign resumed:
"I must add, however, that the wisdom of my scepter commands that you be punished with fifty days of forced imprisonment, so that you may learn to use your intellectual capacity for the benefit of all.

Human intelligence is a light whose brightness must be consecrated to cooperation with the Supreme Lord on Earth.

Your invention does not appear to advance the field or generate meaningful work. It does not benefit agricultural production or support livestock.

It does not protect water sources, maintain infrastructure, contribute to education, or align with broader community values. Additionally, as observed today, it has resulted in significant time spent without a productive outcome.

Return to your blessed mental activities, even in prison, and dedicate your intelligence to creating services and utilities for the benefit of all, because, if my power rewards you, my experience corrects you."

When the king concluded and stepped down from the tribune, the inventor had become very pale; the people did not applaud; however, everyone learned, in the wise decision of the great sovereign, that no one should underestimate the treasures of intelligence and time on Earth.

24
The Disappointed Apprentice

A boy who ardently desired to reside in Heaven, one beautiful morning, while in the field with a donkey, received a visit from an angel.

He quickly recognized the emissary from Above by his kind smile and resplendent robe. Crazy with joy, the boy cried out:
"Messenger of Jesus, I want paradise! What can I do to get there?"

The angel gently replied:
"The first path to Heaven is obedience, and the second is work."

The little boy, who did not seem very diligent, became thoughtful.
The messenger of God then said:
"I come to this field to help Nature, which provides us so much."

He fixed his gaze more gently on the child and asked:
"Would you like to help me clear the ground by carrying these stones to the nearby ditch?"

The boy replied:
"I can't."

However, when the heavenly emissary addressed the donkey, the animal promptly agreed to carry the stones, patiently leaving the land free and pleasant.

Then the angel began to give orders loudly, but the boy refused to help, while the donkey obeyed. When it was time to move the plow, the boy resorted to foul language, avoiding collaboration.

The disciplined mule, however, helped as much as it could, in silence. When it was time to prepare the seedbed, the same situation occurred: the boy rested and the donkey worked.

In all the initial stages of cultivation, the heavy animal acted carefully, collaborating efficiently with the heavenly farmer; however, the boy, full of health and lightness, remained sulky, in a corner, whining without knowing why and accusing no one in particular.

At the end of the day, the field was beautiful. Well-designed flower beds appeared in the center, flanked by beneficial streams of water. The trees around them seemed proud to protect them. The wind blew so gently that it resembled a divine breath singing in the bell-flowers of the undergrowth. The moon appeared, spreading intense light.

The angel embraced the obedient animal, thanking it for its contribution. Seeing that the messenger was leaving, the boy cried out anxiously:
“Dear angel, I want to go with you; I want to go to Heaven!”

The divine emissary replied, however:
“Paradise was not made for lazy people. If you wish to find it, first learn to obey like the donkey who knew how to receive the blessing of discipline and the value of education.”

After providing clarification, he departed, leaving the young boy disappointed but motivated to change his life.

25
The False Beggar

Zezélia had been begging for many years. She was not so sick that she could not work, producing something useful, but she did not dare face any disciplined service.

"Alms, for the love of God!" she asked all day long, addressing passersby as she sat at the door of a filthy shed. From time to time, friends, after giving her a nickel, would advise:
"Zezélia, could not you plant some corn?"
"I cannot.." She would reply quickly.

“Zezélia, perhaps you could sell a few pounds of coffee?”
“Who am I, my son? I don't have the strength...”

“Wouldn't you like to wash clothes and earn some money?” Asked the kind ladies.
“Don't even think about it. I can't handle it...”

“Zezélia, let's sell flowers!” Invited some young women who felt sorry for her.
“I can't walk, my daughters!” She exclaimed, sighing.

“What about embroidery, Zezélia?” Asked a helpful neighbor. "You have your hands free. The needle is a good companion. Maybe you could help us. You'll receive fair compensation."

“My fingers aren't steady,” she insisted stubbornly, "and I don't have enough energy... I can't, ma'am..."

And so, Zezélia lived prostrate, without spirit, without joy. She claimed to feel pain all over her body. She talked about her cough, dizziness, and cold at length, which few people had the time to listen to.

In addition to her constant complaints, she claimed that she didn't drink coffee because she had no sugar and that she hadn't had lunch because she had no food. Zezélia begged, cried, and complained so much that, one morning, she was found dead, and the public charity buried her body with great pity.

All her neighbors and acquaintances believed that Zezélia's soul had gone straight to Heaven; however, this was not the case.

She woke up in the middle of a very dark and very cold field. She realized she was alone and called out for God's help. After a long time, an angel appeared and said kindly:
“Zezélia, what do you want?”
“Ah!” She said. “Am I already known in the Heavenly House?”
“For a long time,” Replied the emissary pitifully.
The old woman began to cry and pleaded tearfully:
“I have suffered greatly! I want help from Above!”

“But listen,” the messenger explained. “Divine help is for those who work. Those who do not plant have nothing to harvest. You did not dig the earth, take care of the plants or the animals, spin the cotton, weave the threads, sew the cloth, care for the children, bake the bread, wash the clothes, sweep the house, care for the flowers, or even take care of your own health and body..."

How do you expect to receive blessings from Above?
The unfortunate woman then remarked:
“There was nothing I could do... I was a beggar...”

The angel, however, replied:
“No, Zezélia! You were not a beggar. You were simply lazy. When you learn to work, call on us and you will receive heavenly help.”

The horizon of light closed before her eyes, and in the darkness, Zezélia returned to Earth to renew herself.

26
The Cry of Anger

Do you remember the moment you screamed loudly before lunch? Over a trivial matter of clothing, you uttered ugly words out loud, disrespecting the peace of the household.

Ah! My son, how many evils were brought about by your angry gesture!

Mother, deeply distressed, ran inside, drawing attention from the entire house. Her headache returned, and her heart began to race again. The two sisters, who were preparing the meal, rushed to the room to help her, and two-thirds of the meal was wasted.

Due to the circumstances caused by your thoughtlessness, your father, deeply displeased, was forced to wait longer at home, arriving at work very late.

His boss was unwilling to tolerate his delay and greeted him with a harsh reprimand. Anyone who saw him, firm and dignified, suffering this punishment due to your recklessness, would feel compassion, because you are nothing more than a young man in need of discipline, and he is a good man, elderly and upright, who has weathered many storms to support and defend his family.

Humiliated, he bore the consequences of your impulsive act for several days, watched in the workshop as if he had been a reckless and careless child.

The results of your outcry, however, were more far-reaching.

Your mother's condition worsened, and the doctor was called. Expensive medications, rushed in, caused a dizzying increase in expenses, and your father was unable to pay all the grocery, pharmacy, and rent bills.

For six months, your entire family struggled and rallied to restore the harmony disastrously broken by your childish rage. One hundred and eighty days of worry and hard work, sacrifices and tears! All because you, incapable of understanding the cooperation of others, began to scream unconsciously, refusing the clothes you

did not like. Consider the lesson, my son, and do not repeat the thoughtless act.

We are all united, reciprocally, by bonds that come from divine design. No one comes together by chance. Higher forces draw us toward one another, so that we may learn the science of happiness, in love and mutual respect.

The blow of the axe fells the tree completely. The gale destroys a nest in an instant. A man's thoughtless action, however, is far worse.

The cry of anger is a deadly bolt of lightning, penetrating the circle of people in which it was uttered and lingering there indefinitely, causing illness, hardship, and sorrow.

Why do not you learn to speak and remain silent, for the benefit of all?

Help instead of complaining. Anger is a hellish force that distances us from divine peace.

War itself, which exterminates millions of creatures, is nothing but the poisonous rage of a few men, spreading for a long time, threatening the entire world.

27
Father's Letter

My son, you were wrong to be angry. I saw perfectly well when the old man approached to serve you.

He had a loving and attentive heart that you could not understand. You gave an order that the poor man did not hear as clearly as you would have liked.

You repeated it, and because he asked you something again, you uttered ugly words that wounded him to the core.
How unfair you were!

When you were born, the former servant had already endured many winters and served many people. His ears grew dull in the face of the imperious orders of others.

Have you never reflected on the haze that clouds his gaze? He acquired it working at night, while you slept, carefree.

Do you know why his legs tremble? He has walked many miles, solving other people's problems.

You get irritated when he takes a long time to move at your command. However, you wish the car for the two-kilometer trip. On many occasions, you complain about him. He seems sloppy to you; his hands are unkempt, and his clothes are not very clean.

Yet, you never imagined that this humble servant would never find opportunities equal to those you received. Furthermore, you offer him neither friendly teaching nor time to consider his own spiritual needs.

You complain about long days spent examining a tiny issue concerning your well-being; yet you don't devote even an hour a week to helping him reflect...

You respond, annoyed, when your old companion asks you for a few nickels, but you do not hesitate to spend small fortunes with idle friends on joyful nights out, in which you immerse yourself in fanciful contentment.

You ask, ungrateful: What did you do with the money I gave you? You forget that the servant with the wrinkled forehead did not have the time or resources to calculate, with accuracy, the processes of earning beyond what was necessary and did not have the opportunity to illustrate his reasoning with the refinement that characterizes yours.

Ah! My son, when impatience visits your spirit, remember that the monster of undesirable anger knocks at the door of your heart. When you give in to it, unwisely, your highest achievements tremble at their foundations.

I hardly recognize you because the fury of your inner elements alters your individuality in my eyes, and I do not know whether you are a child or a demon!

If you still cannot contain the impulsive movements of disturbing feelings, when the moment of testimony arrives, be silent and wait. Anger builds nothing and restores nothing... It only sows mistrust and fear around your steps.

Do not threaten with your voice, nor rebel against anyone. It is likely that you have some complaint against me, your father, because I am also still human. However, son, above us both remains the Supreme Father, and what would become of you and me if God were to one day become angry with us?

28
Fundamental Preaching

An apprentice of Our Lord Jesus Christ felt a burning passion for the teachings of the Gospel, and his heart overflowed with devotion as he dedicated himself to sharing them. Day and night, he pored over the Master's lessons, eager to bring their light to everyone he met.

However, as he devoted himself to sharing the Gospel, he eventually realized that he needed to pay his own expenses and was therefore compelled to seek work.

He worked for a supervisor he disliked. The service director did not share his faith and was against his religious beliefs. He tightly managed his schedule and often made harsh and rude comments.

The preacher of the Crucified One no longer moved with the freedom of another time. He was forced to devote long days to difficult work that consumed all his strength. He continued to teach the good doctrine as much as he could, but he could no longer act and speak as or when he wanted. His minutes were counted, his opportunities divided, and his weeks scheduled. Considering himself a victim of his boss's orders, he sought out the service director and resigned.

The owner who had employed him asked him why he had made such a decision. Somewhat ironically, the young man explained: "I want to be free to better serve Jesus. Therefore, I cannot accept the captivity of your house."

That day, feeling independent and content, he engaged in discussions on Christian doctrine at several religious houses until after midnight. While resting, he dreamed that the Master was coming to find him. He noticed her beauty and knelt to kiss her robe.

Jesus, however, wore an expression of pain and undisguised sadness. The disciple became uneasy and asked:
“Lord, why are you so bitter?”
Christ replied melancholically:
“Because you have despised, my son, the preaching I entrusted to you?”

“How so, Lord?” replied the young man. "Even today I abandoned a tyrannical man to better teach your word. I have spoken in various temples and commented on the Good News wherever I had gone."

“Yes,” exclaimed the Master, "this is the preaching you offer me, and I wish you to continue fervently; however, I entrusted to your spirit the fundamental preaching of the truth to a man who manages my interests on Earth, and you did not know how to carry it out.

You classified him as ignorant and cruel; however, you forget that he is unaware of what you know. And do you intend to ignore that the human guide I gave you could only approach my teachings at this time through your example?

Your constructive humility, in the spirit of service, would change his heart... If you gave him five consecutive years of evangelical demonstrations, he would be prepared to walk, on his own, toward the Divine Kingdom! Your boss, who rules over the time of two hundred men, would become better, more humane, and noble, without compromising energy and efficiency...

You can teach the heavenly path to a hundred thousand ears, but the preaching of example, which converts a single heart to the Infinite Good, establishes more quickly the redemption of the world!”

The apprentice wanted to ask something; however, Christ withdrew in a whirlwind of luminous mist.

He woke up with a start and did not sleep again that night. In the morning, he set off for the establishment where he had worked, sought out the director from whom he had resigned, and humbly asked:
"Sir, I apologize for my thoughtless gesture and, if possible, please take me back into this house! I will accept any kind of task."
The boss, surprised, asked:
“Who led you to this change?”
“It was Jesus,” replied the young man, "we cannot serve him through indiscipline or personal pride."

The director agreed without hesitation, exclaiming:
“Come in! We are at your service.”

He noted the goodwill and sincere desire to serve that the employee now vividly demonstrated, and began to reflect on the greatness of the doctrine that guided a man's steps toward moral improvement.

The apprentice of the Gospel, who resumed his ordinary work, intensely happy, finally understood that he could continue with the verbal propaganda he desired and the basic preaching of the example that Jesus expected of him.

29
The Unruly Clay

A potter arrived at the yard and saw a small, vivid block of clay. Pleased, he said:
"Come on! I'll shape you into a delicate lab pot. The analyst will value your role."
To his surprise, the clay responded:
"Oh no, I don't want that! In a lab, facing chemicals? Please, not for that purpose!"

The potter, surprised, thought:
"I wish to shape you out of love, not hate. You will endure the heat of the kiln so that you may become beautiful and useful... Meanwhile, because you refuse what I propose, I will transform you into a capricious amphora destined to store perfumes."

"Oh, never!" Exclaimed the clay. "I do not wish to be subjected to unconscious experiences. I am unwilling to endure the presence of fragrances as they move through ornate furnishings."

The owner of the service meditated deeply on the disobedience of the proud mud, but, understanding that he must do everything possible not to betray Heaven's trust, he pondered:
"Well, I will convert you, then, into an honorable and robust dish. You will appear on the table in my home. You will stay with us and be a companion to my little children."

"Never!" Cried the clay, in defiance. "That would be a heavy humiliation... To carry cooked rice and endure greasy broth on my face? To watch, helpless, the scenes of gluttony in your home? No, do not subject me to that!"

The dedicated worker forgave the offense and added:
"We will modify the program once more. You will be a friendly vessel, in which the clear water rests. You will help the thirsty who approach you. Many people will bless your cooperation. You will awaken contentment and gratitude in creatures!"

"No, no!" protested the clay. "I don't want to! It would condemn me to an indefinite period in the dusty corners or in the dark rooms of disreputable people. Please, spare me! Spare me!"

The careful potter considered, worried:
"What will become of you when they take you to the oven? You will be nothing more than hardened, formless matter, devoid of any use or beauty. Without sacrifice and discipline, no one rises to the planes of higher life."

The clay, however, refused the warning, crying out:
"I accept neither sacrifice nor discipline..."

Before he could continue, the kiln operator passed by, gathering up the finished clay, and the disobedient clay was also taken to the burning kiln.

After some time, the vain mud was removed and—Oh! What a surprise! —It was not a laboratory pot, nor a perfume amphora, nor a dinner plate, nor a water vase, but rather an ugly piece of burnt and dead earth, without any meaning, immediately thrown into the swamp.

This happens to many creatures worldwide. They rebel against the sovereign will of the Lord, who invites them to work toward perfection, but after being led by experience into the furnace of death, they become true ghosts of disappointment and suffering, needing a long time to return to the blessings of a nobler life.

30
Give of Yourself

You state that you are unable to provide financial assistance. Do you believe that a bit of paper or a nickel can replace your heart?

Do you forget, my son, that you can smile at the sick and extend your hand to those in need?

The flower does not carry a purse of gold, yet it spreads its perfume across the sky.

The sky does not shower coins, but fills the world with light.

How much do you pay for the fresh air that, with friendly breaths, visits your room in the morning?

Does oxygen charge you a tax?

How much does maternal tenderness cost you?

The birds sing for free. The spring that offers you a comforting bath requires no monthly fee.

The tree opens its welcoming arms to you, full of flowers and fruit, without asking for a penny.

Every night, divine blessing leads your thoughts to blessed rest in sleep, and you give nothing in return.

You often dream of picking roses in a beautiful garden, surrounded by happy companions; yet you have never thought to thank the spiritual geniuses who provide you with such blissful rest.

The stars shine without payment.

The sun does not expect a salary.

Why not learn from the nature around you?

Why not make yourself happier, more communicative, sweeter?

You have a dry and gloomy countenance because you lack excessive money, and you demand material resources to be good, when goodness does not come from coffers.